

Living with Wildlife

Trapping Wildlife

If you cannot resolve a conflict with an animal by other means—such as removing the attractant, installing a barrier, applying a scare tactic—a final alternative is to trap it. Trapping is the last option because it presents many problems for both the animals and the trapper. Also, it rarely is a permanent solution if other animals are in the area, and food and/or shelter remain available to them.

An animal that is simply passing through the yard or living in a tree in the backyard should not be trapped. There is no guarantee that the next animal to

move in won't be a problem. Living near animals is like having new neighbors—you never know what the situation will be until after the new family has already moved in.

Appropriate times to trap an animal in or around a home or property include emergency situations, the removal of a targeted problem animal, or when trapping is the only practical solution.

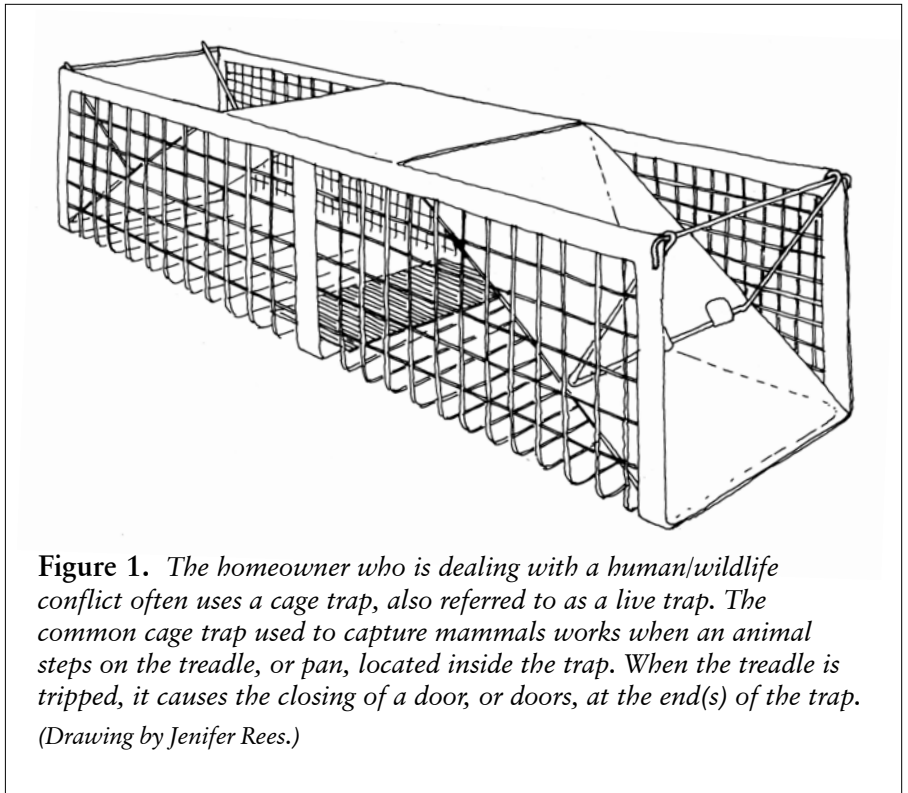


Figure 1. *The homeowner who is dealing with a human/wildlife conflict often uses a cage trap, also referred to as a live trap. The common cage trap used to capture mammals works when an animal steps on the treadle, or pan, located inside the trap. When the treadle is tripped, it causes the closing of a door, or doors, at the end(s) of the trap.*
(Drawing by Jenifer Rees.)

Basic Trap Designs

Modern traps fall into two main categories: quick-kill type traps and live-holding traps. Kill-type traps are designed to quickly kill the captured animal, much like a common snap-trap used on house mice. Live-holding traps can be separated into cage traps, foothold traps, and snares.

This handout deals only with the use of cage traps used to capture mammals (Fig. 1). These are the traps most often used by people dealing with human/wildlife conflicts in yards, gardens, and houses. They come in a variety of designs; their sizes range from those that capture mice to those that capture large dogs. To avoid injuring people or trapping pets and other non-targeted animals in urban or suburban settings, cage traps often are the only traps permitted for use in these areas.

Except mice and rat snap-traps, quick-kill traps and other live holding traps should be left to professionals and individuals who meet state requirements and are authorized to use these traps under permit.

Cage-Trapping Wildlife

Two questions to ask yourself before attempting to trap an animal are: (1) Can I do this legally (comply with state laws regarding trapping and transporting wildlife? and (2) Can I do this humanely? (see “Options for What to Do with the Trapped Animal”). If the answer to either of these is no, consider hiring a professional who is better able to meet these ends (see the handout, *Hiring a Wildlife Damage Control Company*, for information).

When used properly, cage traps can offer non-lethal solutions to conflicts. However, despite the perception that live capture in cage traps is humane, animals often experience stress and physical damage during capture. Captured animals may also suffer from exposure to extreme weather and lack of water. Such injuries, trauma, and disorientation can lead to the death of an animal days after it has been released.

For these reasons, it is important that all precautions described throughout this handout are carefully followed.

Cage traps can be purchased from hardware stores, farm supply centers, and over the Internet (search for “Live Traps” and “Cage Traps”). Some rental business and wildlife damage control companies rent them. Before using a trap, be sure it is clean, to prevent the animal coming in contact with or spreading potentially dangerous organisms. A dirty trap should be washed, disinfected with a bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts of water and let it remain on for 20 minutes), and thoroughly rinsed. To protect yourself, always wear gloves when handling the trap.

When Not to Trap

Never trap an adult animal that is caring for dependent offspring. Look and listen for young—even outside the animal’s known birthing season. If young are seen, heard, or you suspect they may be present, the most humane thing to do is to leave the family alone until they move on their own. Squirrels, raccoons, opossums, and other young mammals generally leave the nest area eight to ten weeks after being born.

If the young need to be moved, you will want to get the mother to move them on her own using one of the techniques described in the handout, *Evicting Animals from Buildings*. Even in an emergency, females can often be persuaded to move their young, thus avoiding the need to trap families.

When an adult animal is trapped, look for enlarged teats that are relatively free of hair, which indicate it is a female nursing young. (By standing the trap up on end you can usually observe the underneath side of the animal.) In such a case, release the female on site so she can tend to her young.

Permanently separating the nursing female from her young would likely cause the offspring to starve to death. Orphaned wildlife must be cared for by licensed professionals. Do not attempt to care for the animals yourself. Not only could you further harm the animals, it is illegal for you to do so. Contact your local wildlife office for a current list of wildlife rehabilitators.

Never trap an animal during poor weather with the intention of releasing it. Trapped animals expend energy that is normally used to cope with winter conditions and they may die soon after.

What to Do with the Trapped Animal

Before trapping an animal, you need to know what you are going to do with it after the animal has been captured. There are a variety of options:

Option 1. Release the animal at the site of capture. With this option, an animal is trapped and released on site after its reentry into a structure is prevented by physical exclusion. (See the handout, *Evicting Animals from Buildings*, for exclusion techniques.)

In such a case, the animal is evicted within its home range and because it is familiar with its surroundings, it can soon find suitable food and shelter. In the event young are present but were not noticed prior to trapping, allow the female back inside to tend to her dependent offspring.

A downside to this approach is the possibility that the animal may simply enter someone else’s attic, chimney, or similar place. Then, if someone else has to trap the animal, they will be dealing with a trap-smart animal, making its capture difficult.

Option 2. Release the animal outside of its home range. The release of elk, bear, and other wildlife by professional wildlife managers to reintroduce or augment populations is a proven and valid technique for wildlife management. However, releases of this kind should not be confused with moving problem wildlife, which may be illegal. For instance, in the State of Washington, it is unlawful to possess or transport live wildlife without a permit (WAC 232-12-064). **This includes Eastern gray squirrels, Eastern cottontail rabbits, raccoons, and opossums. They are considered wildlife because they occur in Washington in a wild state—which includes neighborhood parks and backyards.**

Many times, not enough consideration is given to the impact of the capture and release process on the animal, or to the animal’s impact on the established wildlife populations at the release site. While wildlife released in a new

location is an option often preferred by well-meaning people opposed to killing animals, this may be at the expense of the released animal or the animals at the release site.

Most biologists do not recommend releasing wildlife outside their home range for the following reasons:

- Mortality rates increase when animals are subjected to stress and trauma associated with capture, handling, transport, and being released into an unfamiliar territory.
- Animals that are released may harm or be harmed by resident animals (e.g., by territorial disputes, disease transmission, gene-pool disruptions, etc.).
- The same (or a competing) species may already be overabundant in the area. Excess animals have to move or die.
- Habitat conditions in the new area might not be suited to the animal being released.
- Many animal species have strong homing instincts and, upon release, they begin traveling in the direction of their capture sites, resulting in exposure to roads and other hazards.
- Animals may cause problems for humans in the vicinity of the release site.

Option 3. Euthanize the animal. The term euthanasia is derived from the Greek terms *eu* meaning good, and *thanatos* meaning death. A “good death” is one that occurs with minimal pain and distress.

Whether to use euthanasia is a personal question and a matter of an individual’s perspective and values. Opinions also depend on what will be killed—people are often less upset if it’s a mouse or a snake that is killed, and more upset if it is a raccoon or a beaver.

The most widely accepted—but still disputed—guidelines for euthanasia practices follow the standards set by the American Veterinarian Medical Association (AVMA), which include:

- An injection of sodium pentobarbital or other pharmaceutical.
- Carbon monoxide (CO) or carbon dioxide (CO₂) supplied to a chamber from a compressed gas cylinder (small and medium sized animals).
- A gun shot to the head (small and medium sized animals. (Check local firearm ordinances).
- Stunning, followed by decapitation (amphibians, reptiles, and birds only).
- Cervical dislocation by stretching the animal so the neck is hyper-extended to separate the first vertebrae from the skull (birds, rabbits, and small rodents only).

Unfortunately, the majority of the above agents of euthanasia require training and care to administer. In addition, most are not available to, or do not appeal to, the do-it-yourselfer.

Care should always be taken to guarantee that the animal is euthanized humanely. If it cannot, or you do not have the necessary training, an alternative would be to contact your local wildlife damage control company, veterinarian, or animal shelter. They may euthanize the animal for a fee.

While drowning and freezing have long been considered a humane way to deal with problem wildlife, animal experts no longer generally accept these techniques, and they are not considered humane by the AVMA standards.

While shooting an animal may sound extreme, in many cases it is the best available method because of its quickness, and it may cause the least amount of stress and pain to the animal. If shooting is used, the operator and firearm must be capable of producing a quick death. To calm down an active animal, the trap can be covered with a dark towel or other cover.

Depending on the species and size of the animal, a .22caliber rifle or revolver, or a high-velocity pellet gun should be used. A pellet gun fired to the head is capable of quickly killing tree squirrels, rabbits, and similar-size mammals. Local laws and regulations regarding the discharge of firearms must be followed. See Step 4 below for information on how to handle the dead animal.

Note: In order to properly check an animal for possible rabies, the animal must not be shot in the head; instead, aim for the lung area directly behind the front shoulder.

Human psychological responses to euthanasia of animals need to be considered, with grief at the loss of life as the most common reaction. People who have to euthanize animals, especially under public pressure to save the animals rather than destroy them, can experience extreme distress and anxiety.

Cage-Trapping Wildlife: Steps to Take

If an animal needs to be trapped and you are uncomfortable or have no interest in doing the work yourself, contact a wildlife damage control company. In the wildlife damage control industry, private companies made up of one or more people offer a variety of services, including trapping.

Experienced trappers know the behavior of each species and the methods required to trap them. They also recognize signs of diseases and nursing females. Often their solution to a conflict will involve setting several cage traps to make sure the entire family of animals is caught—or as many as possible at one time. Multiple traps are not something most homeowners have on hand. (See the handout, *Hiring a Wildlife Damage Control Company*, for more information.)

Note: Persons working at state wildlife offices do not provide trapping services, but they can provide names of individuals and companies that do.

If you are somewhat knowledgeable about wildlife, have identified the species of animal to be trapped, and feel you can handle the situation in a humane and legal way, follow the steps below.

See Table 1 for detailed trapping information for individual species.

Step 1. Develop a Plan that Includes Options

- Contact your local wildlife office and municipality for current information on trapping restrictions (types of traps to be used, requirements for euthanization, species of biological concern in the area) and any required authorization.
- Decide if the animal will be released on site, euthanized, or moved somewhere else by someone who has a permit to transport it.
- If it is to be released on site, be ready to make all necessary construction repairs to ensure that the animal will not reenter the structure after being released.
- If the animal is to be euthanized, decide who, and if necessary, how it will be done. **Note:** Have a backup plan in case your original plan changes.

Step 2. Set the Trap

- Set the cage trap as near to the den as possible, in the animal's pathway, or in the area of damage (see Table 1 for specific recommendations). When locating the trap, consider the possibility of young children approaching the trapped animal, theft of the trap, or damage to the trap by vandals.
- If setting a trap on concrete or another hard surface, place the trap on plywood or some other protective surface to prevent the animal from damaging its paws when trying to dig its way out. To prevent raccoons and opossums from toppling the trap, make sure the protective material extends out from the trap at least 8 inches and locate the trap away from shrubs or other objects that they could grab.
- A captured animal often defecates in a trap. If the trap is set outdoors, biological risk is minimal but still real. Refrain from setting a trap near a shallow well, garden, playpen, or where a dog is tethered. Traps set inside the living area of the house should be placed on top of at least ten sheets of newspaper.
- Place a tennis ball in the trap to give a large animal a way to release energy and frustration; a piece of wood will provide a small animal something to chew.
- Anchor the trap so it won't tip or misfire when the animal enters—**an animal will not enter a tipsy trap**, and misfires teach it not to try and enter again. Anchor the trap with a cinder block or other heavy object placed on top. You can also pound rebar stakes into the ground at the corners, or wire or clamp the trap to a stable object.

- Set the trap and then trip it several times to be sure the cage is steady and functioning properly. Trip the trap by using a pen or pencil, sticking an end through the side of the cage and pushing down on the treadle. If the doors do not work fast enough, place small stones or other weights on top of the door to make it drop faster.
- Use plenty of the suggested bait so it will be seen and its odor released into the air (see Table 1 and “Capturing a Wary or Trap Smart Animal” for detailed information regarding baiting).

Step 3. Monitor the Trap and Animal

- Be “on call” the entire time a trap is set.
- A trap set for a nocturnal animal should be set at or near dusk. The unset trap should be closed at dawn to avoid trapping a non-target animal during the day. Reverse this procedure when attempting to capture a diurnal (active during daylight) animal. Change the trap location or try different bait if it doesn’t produce a catch within three days.
- When an animal is captured, move the trap to a quiet, protected spot and cover it with a tarp until time of release or euthanasia. A captured animal should not remain in the trap longer than necessary. **Note:** In summer, a trap set where the sun can beat down on it can cause the animal to dehydrate rapidly, suffer a heat stroke, or die.
- If the captured animal appears injured or sick (i.e., having a discharge from eyes or nose, or a dull, sparse coat or scabby skin) and you don’t want to euthanize it or have it euthanized, contact a wildlife rehabilitator (see Wildlife Rehabilitators and Wildlife Rehabilitation). **Note:** Most vets and animal shelters won’t accept a sick wild animal because of their concern for the spread of disease.

Step 4. Remove the Animal from the Trap

- Release nocturnal animals at night and diurnal species during daylight.
- Point the opening of the trap toward escape cover, so the animal can see and move toward it. Stand at the opposite end of the trap, open the door, and tap the trap with your foot. If the animal is reluctant to leave, try placing the open trap on its side and moving away from the trap.
- When releasing an animal that offers the potential of a bite or a spray, attach a long string to the door of the trap prior to setting it, so the door can later be opened from a distance. Place the trap under the driver’s-side door of a truck, or a window on a house, lean out the window, and hold the door open with the string until the animal exits. **Note:** Skunks and opossums often take their time when leaving a cage trap.
- The carcasses of euthanized animals must be disposed of properly. To dispose of an animal on-site, the carcass must be covered by at least 2 feet of soil and located at least 200 feet from any groundwater well that is used to supply drinking water. Cover the burial hole with rocks or strong wire screening to help prevent animals digging into it. Sprinkling a layer of garden lime on the carcass will also help reduce the odor, which attracts digging animals. If it is not feasible to dispose of a carcass on-site, contact a local veterinarian or wildlife damage control company for assistance with disposal. Animal carcasses should never be handled with bare hands.

Step 5. Follow up

- A trap that contained a sick animal should be washed, disinfected with a bleach solution (1 part bleach to 9 parts of water and let it remain on for 20 minutes), and thoroughly rinsed after each capture so as to stop the spread of any potential disease.
- Immediately complete all repair work necessary to prevent another conflict.

Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal

Tips from trappers who capture wary or trap-smart animals include:

Entice an animal into a trap by sprinkling bits of bait leading from the travel route of the animal to the trap door and into the trap. To prevent filling the animal up with food before it enters the trap, use a small amount of bait, every 6 to 12 inches.

Funnel the animal into the trap using the funnel method (Fig. 2).

Wire bait to the back of a single-door trap to force the animal to step on the trip pan while reaching forward to get the bait. Wrap the back of the cage with small-mesh wire screen so the animal can't reach through the larger mesh wire to get the bait.

Put out an unset trap with the door(s) wired open for several nights. Offer some bait outside the trap the first night, at the trap's entrance the second night, and then inside the trap the third night—still without setting it. On the fourth night, place the bait inside and set the trap with an unwired door(s).

Camouflage the trap by covering the bottom with soil, leaf litter, grass clippings, or similar material, using enough to just hide the treadle. (A different material placed on the bottom of the same trap can sometimes be used to catch an animal a second time.) Also, place a few things like branches, boughs, or boards over or leaning against the trap to cover any glare and break up the outline of the trap. Make sure this camouflage does not interfere with the operation of the trap.

To help make the trap as "invisible" as possible, reduce the high glare of the cage steel with some earth tone paint.

To deal with the animal's sensitive nose, wear old gloves when preparing the trap, and do not walk or linger around the site any longer than necessary. New cage-traps may need to be washed with water and vinegar to remove oils. Before leaving, mist the area around the trap with a spray bottle containing water and fir needles, or other local aromatic vegetation.

When using a two-door trap, securely fasten one door down to prevent an animal from backing out and getting away. With two-door traps, the trip pan to release the doors is in the middle of the trap, and only allows the animal to get halfway into the trap before it closes. The door may land on the back or tail of a large raccoon and not close completely.

To prevent this, use a trap with only one door, use a larger two-door trap, or secure one of the doors down so only one is in operation. This allows the bait to be placed in back of the trap, forcing the animal to go farther into it. You can also place a wedge-shaped piece of wood under the trip pan on the open-door side of the trap. This allows the animal to step on the front side, without anything happening. As it steps on the back side of the pan, the door closes.

To prevent capturing birds, mix peanut butter/oatmeal/sunflower seeds as bait. Place this on the inside roof of the trap above the pan. Spreading the bait above the trip pan keeps it out of sight of birds and causes the animal to stand on the pan to taste the bait. An option is to smear peanut butter on a pine cone or other inedible object—not bread, which is another bird attractant—and place it on the bottom of the trap.

To prevent catching a domestic cat or dog, don't bait with meat or fish products. However, if the target animal has been eating pet food, use pet food as bait.

To prevent bait from getting wet, place it in a light-colored, covered container with plenty of holes punched in the side.

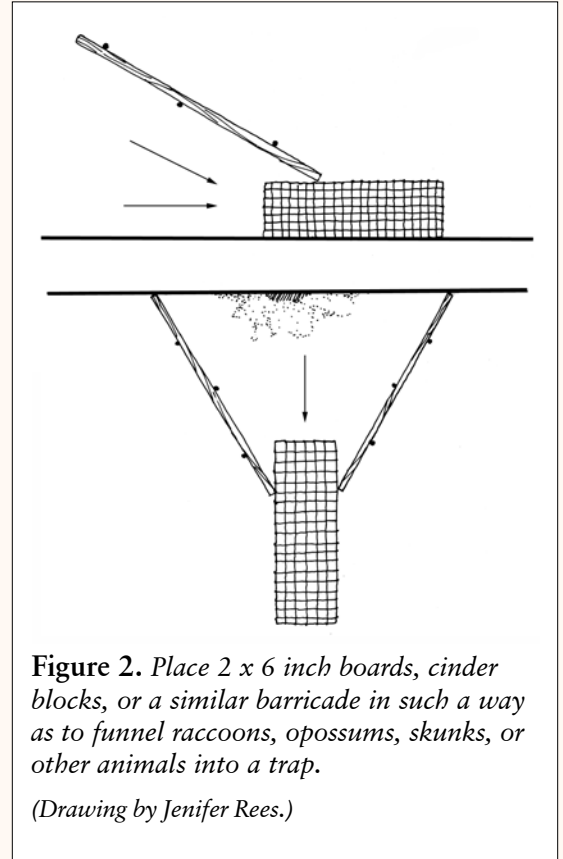


Figure 2. Place 2 x 6 inch boards, cinder blocks, or a similar barricade in such a way as to funnel raccoons, opossums, skunks, or other animals into a trap.

(Drawing by Jenifer Rees.)

Table 1. Cage-trapping specifications.

Note: The below are minimum height, width, and length measurements.

Wildlife Species	Trap type, size (height, width, length)	Bait	Notes
Badger	Single-door type, 10 x 12 x 42 in.	Chicken and attractors such as feathers and eggshells, cotton balls, or marshmallows.	Due to the strength and aggressiveness of badgers, it is recommended that a professional trapper trap them. Contact your local wildlife office for release sites.
Bat	Trapping bats is not recommended. Traps can be fatal to bats if left unattended, or if they become overcrowded. In addition, bats have excellent homing instincts, making moving bats unlikely to succeed. Instead, use the exclusion methods described under “Bats Roosting in Buildings” in the handout titled Bats .		
Beaver	Beaver Hancock or Bailey suitcase-type trap	Freshly cut tree sprouts or branches, commercial scents and lures.	Due to the weight and dangers associated with suitcase traps, it is recommended that only people experienced with these traps use them. Some success has also come from using a 4 foot long cage trap set right at the water’s edge next to the beaver slide.
Bobcat	Single-door type, 15 x 20 x 42 in.	Poultry or rabbit carcass and feathers for a sight attractor.	Set the trap in the vicinity of an animal kill or a travel way to and from cover. Use brush or grass on the top and sides of the trap to give the appearance of a natural “cubby” or a recess in a rock outcrop or in brush. Cover the cage bottom with soil. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.)
Cat (domestic cat)	Single-door type, 11 x 11 x 32 in. Double-door traps should be 42 in. long	Moist or dry cat food, tuna.	Set the trap in the area being frequented by the particular cat. Pre-baiting and laying a towel or something over the floor may be necessary. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.) Note: A cat that is assumed to be a docile pet can turn into a hostile animal when captured. Handle a caged domestic cat with the same respect you would any wild animal.
Coyote	Single-door type, 20 x 26 x 48 in.	Sight attractors like chicken feathers, eggshells, cotton balls. An auditory lure that “squeals” can be effective. Wrap it in paper towels and a baggie to muffle the volume.	Cage traps are rarely effective at capturing healthy adult coyotes and most effective at capturing young or sick coyotes living in urban areas or entering a chicken coop or other holding area for pets, livestock, or birds. The trap should be thoroughly concealed with a tarp or other material, and extra precautions need to be taken to eliminate human scent from the area of the trap. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.)
Chipmunk	Single- or double-door type, 5 x 5 x 16 in.	Unroasted peanuts, sunflower seeds, grain, popcorn, apple slices.	Place the trap where the chipmunk is active. Place a few sunflower seeds in front of the trap entrance.

Wildlife Species	Trap type, size (height, width, length)	Bait	Notes
Dog (domestic dog)	Single-door type, 12 x 12 x 36 to 20 x 28 x 72 in., depending on size of dog	Moist dog food.	Set the trap in the area being frequented by the particular dog. Note: A dog that is assumed to be a docile pet can turn into a hostile animal when captured. Handle a caged dog with the same respect you would any wild animal.
Fox (red fox)	Single-door type, 15 x 15 x 48 in.	Tainted meat, eggs placed in a nest, marshmallows, cotton balls (they resemble eggs and have eye appeal).	Foxes are long-bodied animals, so the trap must be long. Take precautions to eliminate human scent from the trap and the area around the trap. Place bait in a hole dug under the rear of the trap. Cover all sides of the trap with a tarp or other material. Sift dirt onto the bottom of the cage to cover the wire bottom. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.)
Ground squirrel	Single-door type, 5 x 5 x 15 in. to 7 x 7 x 24 in., longer if a double-door trap is used	Peanut butter, oats, barley, fresh fruit, vegetables, greens.	Set the trap near an active burrow with signs of recent diggings. Placing guide logs on either side of the path between the burrow opening and the trap will help funnel the animal into the trap. Cover the floor of the trap with soil and leave the bait highly visible. Cover the trap with a tarp to conceal the trap and provide an enticing nook for the animal to enter. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.)
Marmot (yellow-bellied marmot)	Single-door type, 12 x 12 x 36 in., longer if a double-door trap is used	Peanut butter, oats, barley, fresh fruit, vegetables, greens.	See Ground squirrels.
Mice	Single or double-door type, 3 x 3 x 10 in.	Peanut butter, grain.	Locate trap along walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and where runways narrow, causing mice to be funneled into a limited area. Mice travel along walls. Mice are easily caught in “snap traps.” See the handout, titled Mice, for additional information.
Mink	Single-door type, 7 x 7 x 17 in., longer if a double-door trap is used	Cheese or fresh bloody meat such as chicken or rabbit; use sight attractors like feathers or fur.	Wrap the cage trap in something dark; mink like to investigate dark holes. Set the trap in the animal’s line of travel.
Mole	See “Lethal Control” in the handout, titled Moles, for information.		
Mountain beaver	Single-door type, 7 x 7 x 17 in.	Piece of apple, sweet potato, or whatever is being eaten in the area.	Set trap directly in the entrance of an active tunnel. Alternatively, place a plastic laundry basket over the hole and cut out an opening just large enough to insert the door of a trap into the basket cut-out. The mountain beaver will search for an opening to go through and enter the trap. Stake the basket down so it cannot be moved. Mountain beavers are very prone to hypothermia, so wrap the trap with black plastic or burlap and cover it with soil. Trap when the weather is mild and check the trap early in the morning.

Wildlife Species	Trap type, size (height, width, length)	Bait	Notes
Muskrat	Single-door type, 6 x 6 x 20 in., longer for double-door traps	Corn, carrot greens, sweet apples, cattail roots.	Place the trap just outside the burrow and partially in the water, taking every precaution that the captured muskrat will not be under water and will be able to breathe. Conceal the cage trap well with grass or leaves. A short line of bait leading to the entrance of a trap will increase capture success.
Nutria	Single-door type, 9 x 9 x 45 in.	Cantaloupe rind, ripe bananas, sweet potatoes.	Place the trap along an active trail or where nutria are seen. A short line of bait leading to the entrance of the trap will increase capture success. A trap placed on a floating raft will effectively catch nutria, but pre-baiting is necessary (see “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal”).
Opossum	Single- or double-door type, 11 x 11 x 36 in	Dry or canned pet food, sardines, old meat, chicken entrails, bacon, fish, apples.	Place the trap where the animal, or evidence of the animal has been seen, or at its den entrance.
Porcupine	Double-door type, 10 x 12 x 42 in.	A salt-soaked cloth, sponge, or piece of wood, also water softener tablets, sweet potatoes, apples, roasted peanuts.	Place the trap in the vicinity of damage or at the den entrance. To lure the porcupine, blend a cup of raw sweet potatoes and an apple, and dribble the puréed mixture at the opening of a single-door live trap.
Rabbit and Hares	Single- or double-door type, 9 x 9 x 26 in.	Fresh vegetables in summer; apples, carrots, or bread in winter.	Place the trap near cover where rabbits feed or rest, or where they gain entry under a fence. Place some bait just outside the trap and spray the inside with apple juice to increase effectiveness. To capture hares (jackrabbits) in open terrain, use a double-door trap with weighted doors to prevent escape. It is best to use a larger trap than used on rabbits.
Raccoon	Single-door type, 10 x 12 x 42 in.	Fish-flavored cat food, corn, ripe bananas, bacon, sardines, peanut butter, jelly marshmallows, (resemble eggs and have eye appeal).	Placed the trap where the animal, or evidence of the animal has been seen, or at its den entrance. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for additional information.)
Rats	Single- or double-door type, 5 x 5 x 18 in.	Peanut butter, grain.	Locate trap along walls, behind objects, in dark corners, and where runways narrow, causing rats to be funneled into a limited area. Rats travel along walls. Rats can be caught in “snap traps.” See the handout, titled Rats, for additional information.
River otter	Single-door type, 10 x 12 x 42 in. larger, longer if a double-door trap is used	Fresh fish.	Cover the bottom of the trap with sand. (See “Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal” for detailed information.) River otters may be trapped in suitcase type traps used to capture beavers. Modify the sides so the otters can’t escape.

Wildlife Species	Trap type, size (height, width, length)	Bait	Notes
Skunk (spotted skunk)	Single-door type, 7 x 7 x 20 in.	Small marshmallows (resemble eggs), tainted meat, sardines, bacon, canned fish.	See below.
Skunk (striped skunk)	Single-door type, 10 x 10 x 24 in.	Peanut butter, bananas, honey, or molasses spread on a piece of bread or dried fruit; also yogurt, cheese, raw egg (trail some through the trap and leave the rest in the back of the trap.	Place the trap along a travel route or immediately outside the den entrance, using the funnel method (Fig. 2). Alternatively, place a plastic laundry basket over the hole and cut out an opening just large enough to insert the door of a trap into the basket cut-out. The skunk will search for an opening to go through and go into the trap. Stake the basket down so it cannot be moved. Box traps designed specially for trapping skunks are available, or a cover can be made out of a dark-colored blanket, plywood, or cardboard fastened with bungee cords. If a skunk is accidentally caught, use a long stick or other device to slowly cover the trap with a towel or blanket before moving it. Avoid sudden, jarring movements or loud noises that may frighten the skunk.
Squirrel (Eastern gray and fox squirrel)	Single- or double-door type, 6 x 6 x 24 in., longer for double-door traps	Peanut butter, nuts, corn, sunflower seed, popcorn, bread	A squirrel may not find a trap set in the dark, or it may bump the trap, causing it to close prematurely. A trap set on the roof is safe from theft, children, and pets, and offers a better chance for catching the squirrel. If possible, find a window adjacent to a roof that the squirrel is using and you won't need a ladder. To prevent catching birds, see "Capturing a Wary or Trap-Smart Animal."
Squirrel (Douglas and flying squirrel)	Single- or double-door type, 5 x 5 x 18 in.	Apples, sunflower seeds, roasted peanuts.	For Douglas squirrels, see above. For flying squirrels, set the trap inside a structure and near the animal's point of entry.
Weasel (long-tailed weasel)	Single- or double-door type, 5 x 5 x 24 in.	Fish, fresh chicken liver, chicken entrails.	Set the trap in an old brush pile, or under an outbuilding or fence, since the weasel is likely to investigate any small covered area.
Weasel (short-tailed weasel)	Single- or double-door type, 5 x 5 x 18 in.	Fish, fresh chicken liver, chicken entrails.	Set the trap in an old brush pile, or under an outbuilding or fence, since the weasel is likely to investigate any small covered area.

Adapted from "Living with Wildlife in the Pacific Northwest" (see <http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/living.htm>)

Written by: Russell Link, WDFW Urban Wildlife Biologist, Linkrel@dfw.wa.gov

Design and layout: Peggy Ushakoff, ITT2

Copyright 2005 by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

This program receives Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is the policy of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to adhere to the following: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. The U.S. Department of the Interior and its bureaus prohibit discrimination on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability and sex (in educational programs). If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility, please contact the WDFW ADA Coordinator at 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091

